

What is Claimed is:

1       1. A method for surveying an online user comprising the  
2       steps of:

3               (1) presenting a first item to the user over a  
4       distributed network;

5               (2) presenting a questionnaire to the user over the  
6       distributed network if the user selects the first item;

7               (3) accepting and storing the user's first response  
8       to the questionnaire;

9               (4) repeating, at least one time, steps 1-2 and  
10      accepting and storing the user's subsequent response(s)  
11      to the questionnaire; and

12               (5) performing online sustainability testing by  
13      comparing the user's first response to the user's  
14      subsequent response(s).

1       2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of  
2       performing online sustainability testing further  
3       comprises correcting or correction for a skewed result.

1       3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of  
2       presenting a first item further comprises presenting a  
3       second item and wherein the questionnaire asks about the  
4       first and second items.

1       4.   The method of claim 3, wherein the step of  
2       presenting a questionnaire to the user only occurs if the  
3       user selects both the first and second items.

1       5.   The method of claim 1 wherein the distributed  
2       network is the Internet.

1       6.   The method of claim 1 wherein the step of presenting  
2       a first item to the user is done by a first entity and  
3       the step of performing online sustainability testing is  
4       done by a second entity.

1       7.   The method of claim 6, wherein the first entity is  
2       an online vendor and the second entity is a producer of  
3       the item.

1       8.   The method of claim 7, wherein the producer shares  
2       results from the online sustainability testing with the  
3       online vendor.

1       9.   The method of claim 7, wherein the producer gives  
2       the item to the online vendor.

1       10.   The method of claim 7, wherein the producer offers  
2       the item exclusively to the online vendor during the  
3       survey of the online consumer.

1       11. The method of claim 1, wherein the item is a snack  
2       food product.

1       12. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps  
2       of:

3           performing offline sustainability testing; and  
4           comparing the results of the online and offline  
5       sustainability testings.

1       13. The method of claim 1, wherein the questionnaire is  
2       a CGI script, JAVA, or PERL applet.

1       14. The method of claim 1, wherein the first response to  
2       the questionnaire is transmitted over the distributed  
3       network.

1       15. The method of claim 14, wherein the first response  
2       to the questionnaire is transmitted in XML.

1       16. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step  
2       of assigning an identifying code to the user, wherein the  
3       first response and the subsequent response(s) are  
4       associated using the identifying code.

1       17. The method of claim 16, wherein the identifying code  
2       is a cookie.

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